

Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ADP-00 NASA-04 SCI-06 EB-11 AID-20

OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

AGR-20 ACDA-19 RSR-01 /205 W
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P R 061435Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5531

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1063

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TSPA, NASA, MA

SUBJ: RETURN OF FONMIN RATSIRAKA; MALAGASIZATION OF NASA TRACKING
STATION; RICE PURCHASING; JAPANESE INVESTMENT

REF: STATE 151355(NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: FONMIN DIDIER RATSIRAKA'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMPLETE
MALAGASIZATION OF PERSONNEL AT NASA TRACKING STATION WITHIN THREE
YEARS AND HIS SEARCH FOR RICE HAVE SHARED MEDIA HEADLINES WITH MAL-
AGASY DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROMOCAM, REPORTED SEPTTEL. MALAGASY CON-
SIDER VISIT TO US VERY SUCCESSFUL, AND OUTLOOK FOR CONTINUING NASA
TRACKING STATION IS EXCELLENT. FONMIN AND SUITE SEEM CONSIDERABLY
LESS ENTHUSIASTIC OVER THEIR JOURNEY TO JAPAN. END SUMMARY.

1. AT 04AUG PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IMMEDIATELY AFTER FONMIN'S ARRI-
VAL AT TANANARIVE AIRPORT, HE SPOKE, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION CON-
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CERNING FUTURE OF NASA TRACKING STATION IN MADAGASCAR, OF HAVING BEEN

PRESENT AT LAUNCHING OF SKYLAB II AND DISCUSSIONS WITH NASA OFFICIALS.

HE QUOTED NASA DIRECTOR FLETCHER AS HAVING ASSURED HIM PERSONNEL AT STATION WOULD ALL BE MALAGASY NATIONALS WITHIN THREE YEARS. HE ASSURED REPORTERS THAT IN MEANTIME MALAGASY TECHNICIANS AND MILITARY OFFICIALS CAN MOVE FREELY ABOUT STATION TO VERIFY WHAT IS GOING ON.

2. IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL QUESTION CONCERNING US LEG OF TRIP, RATSIRAKA REITERATED THAT THERE IS NO RPT NO LONGER A SINGLE CLOUD OVER US-MALAGASY RELATIONS. "I WOULD NOT HAVE GONE IF THE OPPOSITE HAD BEEN CASE, AND SIGNATURE OF LOAN AGREEMENT CONSTITUTES PROOF OF THIS NORMALIZATION", IS DIRECT QUOTE IN GOVT-OPERATED MAD PRESSE DAILY INFO BULLETIN. HE REJECTED OUT OF HAND POSSIBILITY OF US USING EXPANDED TELEPHONE NETWORK RESULTING FROM LOAN AS MEANS OF SPYING. IT IS POSSIBLE FOR ARTIFICIAL SATELLITES TO BE ENGAGED IN SPYING BUT MALAGASY COULD DO NOTHING ABOUT THAT. USSR, WHICH MUST BE OPERATING IN SAME MANNER (AS US), SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO SAY ON SUBJECT, HE ADDED. MINISTER SPOKE HIGHLY OF US TECHNOLOGY IN LIVESTOCK RAISING AND MENTIONED HIS OBSERVANCE OF ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION OF BRAHMANS IN FLORIDA WHICH HAS RELEVANCE TO MADAGASCAR.

3. ALTHOUGH RATSIRAKA DID NOT RPT NOT DWELL ON SUBJECT OF RICE, HE INDICATED ONE OF HIS PURPOSES IN VISITING US WAS TO NEGOTIATE POSSIBLE RICE PURCHASES SINCE US IS LARGEST RICE PRODUCER IN WORLD.

4. RATSIRAKA SPENT LARGE PORTION OF PRESS CONFERENCE ON JAPANESE LEG OF TRIP. HE ATTEMPTED DISPEL RUMORS THAT JAPANESE HAD BEEN INVITED TO PLAN COMPLETE RESTRUCTURING OF MALAGASY ECONOMY AND REITERATED THAT MALAGASY MUST COUNT ON THEMSELVES TO BRING THAT ABOUT. REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO JAPANESE INVESTMENT, HE SAID JAPANESE FIRMS CANNOT COUNT ON LARGE PROFITS AND ADDED THAT SEVENTY PERCENT OF PROFITS OF SUCH FIRMS MUST GO TO MALAGASY AND ONLY THIRTY PERCENT TO THEMSELVES.

5. TRIP TO CANADA WAS DESCRIBED AS PRELIMINARY STUDY MISSION TO DISCUSS COOPERATION, SPECIFICALLY SCHOLARSHIPS.

6. FONMIN COMMENTED FAVORABLY TO AMB ON VISIT TO US AS HE DESCENDED FROM PLANE. DIRECTOR OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, RATSIMANDRESY, WHO

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ACCOMPANIED RATSIRAKA THROUGHOUT MONTH-LONG SERIES OF VISITS TO JAPAN, CANADA, AND US, ALSO EMPHASIZED TO AMB AND DCM AT AIRPORT THAT HE AND FONMIN WERE EXTREMELY HAPPY WITH US PORTION OF VISIT, LEAVING IMPRESSION THAT THE JAPANESE PORTION WAS LESS THAN ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY.

7. COMMENT: FONMIN'S HANDLING OF NASA QUESTION LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE NEGOTIATE CONTINUANCE OF OPERATIONS TRAC-

KING STATION THROUGH 1976 SUCCESSFULLY.
MENDENHALL

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